

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A video surveillance and monitoring system, comprising;
a private network that enables communication with surveillance cameras corresponding to geographic sites, wherein at least two surveillance cameras correspond to geographically distinct sites; and
a centralized off-site control site, including an image database and at least one server, said at least one server being coupled to said private network and to a public network, said at least one server being operative to initialize communications between the surveillance cameras and at least one off-site client workstation coupled to said public network, to coordinate the retrieval of video images from said surveillance cameras, to produce said retrieved video images as live images to the at least one client workstation, and to archive said retrieved video images in said image database for subsequent production to at least one client workstation coupled to said public network, wherein the client workstation cannot initialize communication with the surveillance cameras.
2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said private network is a virtual private network configured over a public network.
3. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said private network is coupled to a camera server, and said camera server is coupled to one or more surveillance cameras.
4. (Previously presented) The system of claim 3, wherein said one or more surveillance cameras produce composite NTSC video signals, and wherein the camera server is operable to capture the NTSC video signals and convert the captured NTSC video signals.
5. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein one of said surveillance cameras is a self-contained web server and network camera.
6. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said public network is a public Internet network.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one off-site server is operative to repeatedly store live video image data to a file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

8. (Original) The system of claim 7, wherein said at least one off-site server is operative to write live video image data to a temporary file, and to rename said temporary file to said file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

9. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein said at least one off-site server is operative to create a video image record to be stored in said image database.

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10. (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein said video image record includes video image data and a date-time value.

11. (Original) The system of claim 9, wherein said video image record further includes information that identifies an event that led to the capture of the video image data.

12. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein said off-site server is operative to ~~receive event data from a client site and to perform~~ a course of action based upon parameters in a configuration file in response to the received event.

13. (Previously presented) The system of claim 31, wherein upon the receipt of data identifying an occurrence of an event, said off-site server is operative to send a text page to one or more recipients alerting said one or more recipients of the occurrence of said event.

14. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein said off-site server is operative to issue a request for video image data upon receipt of data identifying an occurrence of an event.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein upon the receipt of said requested video image data, said off-site server is operative to send an electronic mail message to one or more recipients alerting said one or more recipients of the occurrence of said event, said electronic mail message include at least part of said requested video image data.

16. (Previously presented) A centralized video surveillance and monitoring system, comprising:

an image database for storing video images; and

at least one server, said at least one server being coupled to a private network that enables communication with surveillance cameras at a plurality of geographically distinct client sites and to a public network, said at least one server being operative to initialize communications between the surveillance cameras and at least one off-site client workstation coupled to said public network, to coordinate the retrieval of video images from said surveillance cameras, to produce said retrieved video images as live images to the at least one client workstation, and to archive said retrieved video images in said image database for subsequent production to at least one client workstation coupled to said public network, wherein the client workstation cannot initialize communication with the surveillance cameras.

17. (Currently amended) In an environment including at least one control server coupled to a private network that enables communication with surveillance cameras at a plurality of geographically distinct client sites and to a public network, wherein the public network cannot initialize communication with the surveillance cameras, a centralized video surveillance and monitoring method, comprising:

- (a) receiving video image data from a surveillance camera;
- (b) producing said received video image data as live images to at least one client workstation via the public network; and
- (c) archiving said received video image data in an image database for subsequent production to at least one client workstation, wherein the image database is located at a centralized, off-site control site with the control server.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein step (b) comprises the step of storing live video image data to a file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein step (b) comprises the steps of writing live video image data to a temporary file, and renaming said temporary file to said file that is retrievable by a client workstation.

20. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein step (c) comprises the step of creating a video image record to be stored in said image database.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20, wherein step (c) comprises the step of creating a video image record that includes video image data and a date-time value.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein step (c) comprises the step of creating a video image record that includes information that identifies an event that led to the capture of the video image data.

B) 23. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising the steps of:

- (d) receiving event data from a client site; and
- (e) performing a course of action based upon parameters in a configuration file.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein step (e) comprises the step of sending a text page to one or more recipients alerting said one or more recipients of the occurrence of an event.

25. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein step (e) comprises the step of issuing a request for video image data.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein step (e) comprises the step of sending an electronic mail message to one or more recipients alerting said one or more recipients of the occurrence of said event, said electronic mail message include at least part of said requested video image data.

27. (Currently amended) In an environment including at least one control server coupled to a private network that enables communication with surveillance cameras at a plurality of geographically distinct client sites, a method in a client workstation for retrieving and viewing video images, captured by said surveillance cameras, that are stored in an image database by the at least one server, comprising:

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(a) receiving computer program logic from a control server that enables the client workstation to display a graphical user interface that includes a plurality of client-site elements representative of a corresponding plurality of geographically distinct client sites, wherein each of said plurality of client-site elements is associated with one or more camera elements representative of one or more cameras located at a client site represented by said client-site element, wherein said server has access to an image database that stores video image data captured by cameras at a plurality of geographically distinct client sites, and wherein the control server and the image database are located at a centralized, off-site control site;

(b) receiving a command from a user to select from a first camera element representative of a first camera at a first client site;

(c) sending a request to a control server for retrieval of video image data, recorded by said first camera, that is archived in the image database; and

(d) displaying said requested video image data in an image viewing window of said graphical user interface.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein step (a) comprises the step of receiving computer program logic that enables the client workstation to display a graphical user interface that includes a plurality of hyperlinked client-site elements representative of a corresponding plurality of geographically distinct client sites, wherein selection of a hyperlinked client-site element enables said graphical user interface to display one or more camera elements representative of one or more cameras located at a client site represented by said hyperlinked client-site element.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein step (a) comprises the step of displaying one or more hyperlinked camera elements, wherein selection of a hyperlinked camera element enables said graphical user interface to display video image data captured by a camera represented by said hyperlinked camera element.

30. (Original) The method of claim 27, wherein step (a) comprises the step of receiving hypertext markup language, JavaScript, and Java code.

31. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 12, wherein the server is further operative to send a notification corresponding to an event processing parameter in the configuration file.

32. (Previously presented) The system as recited in Claim 14 wherein the server is further operative to associated time-zone offset to the real-time video data, the time-zone offset corresponding to a time-zone offset parameter in the configuration file.

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33. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 14, wherein the server is further operative to control the retrieval of real time video data corresponding to a time parameter in the configuration file.

34. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the server is further operative to generate a camera control code instructing one or more of these surveillance cameras to move to a predefined position.

35. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 26, wherein the server is further operative to generate the camera control code after a designated period of time.

36. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 35, wherein the server is further operative to generate a series of camera control codes instructing one or more of the surveillance cameras to move to a series of predefined positions.

37. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the server is further operative to generate an interface for displaying real-time video image data from a plurality of client sites.

38. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 37, wherein the interface is a Web-based interface.

39. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 38, wherein the Web-based interface includes a calendar interface, wherein the calendar interface includes a number of hyperlinks, the

hyperlinks corresponding to predefined periods of time and operable to generate additional screen interfaces corresponding to a time selection.

40. (Currently amended) The system of Claim 39, wherein the hyperlinks correspond to months in a year and wherein the hyperlinks are operable to generate an additional screen interface [[is]] presenting a user with a selection of a particular time to control surveillance camera.

B 41. (Previously presented) The system of Claim 1, wherein the server is further operative to extract real-time video data from at least one surveillance camera utilizing dynamic block data management schema.

42. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 21, wherein the date-time value includes a time-zone offset value.

43. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 23, wherein performing a course of action based upon parameters in a configuration file include associated in time-zone offset to the video image data.

44. (Currently amended) The method as ~~reciting the method of~~ recited in Claim 23, further comprising generating at least one camera control code instructing one or more surveillance cameras to move to a pre-defined location.

45. (Previously presented) The method as recited in Claim 44, wherein generating at least one camera control code includes generating a number of camera control codes instructing a surveillance camera to move to a series of pre-defined locations.

46. (Previously presented) The method as recited in Claim 45, wherein generating at least one camera control code includes generating at least one camera control code after a designated time period has expired.

47. (Currently amended) The method as recited in ~~the method of~~ Claim 23, wherein performing a course of action based on parameters in a configuration file include generating a user interface for displaying the video image data.

48. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 47, wherein the user interface is a Web-based user interface.

49. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 48, wherein the Web-based interface includes a calendar interface, wherein the calendar interface includes a number of hyperlinks, the hyperlinks corresponding to predefined periods of time and operable to generate additional screen interfaces corresponding to a time selection.

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50. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 49, wherein the hyperlinks correspond to months in a year and wherein the hyperlinks are operable to generate additional screen interfaces presenting the user with a selection of a particular time to control surveillance camera.

51. (New) In an environment including at least one control server coupled to a private network that enables communication with a plurality of surveillance cameras, a video image data retrieval and processing method, comprising:

(a) obtaining a block of video image data including at least one image frame from one of the plurality of surveillance cameras;

(b) identifying a frame boundary for an image frame;

(c) determining whether the end of the block of received video image data has been reached;

if it is determined that the end of the block of received video image data has not been reached:

(d) extracting the image frame; and,

(e) processing the image frame;

if it is determined that the end of the block of received video image data has been reached:

(f) obtaining a second block of video image data including at least one image frame; and

(g) repeating steps (b) through (f).

52. (New) The method of Claim 51, wherein if it is determined that the end of the block of video image data has been reached, modifying a size of the block of received video image data prior to obtaining a second block of video image data including at least one image frame.

53. (New) The method of Claim 51, wherein the step of processing the image frame includes, processing the image frame for live production to a client site.

B 54. (New) The method of Claim 53, further including:
storing the extracted video image into a file on the control server that is accessible by the client site.

55. (New) The method of Claim 51, wherein the step of processing the image frame includes, processing the image frame for archival.

56. (New) The method of Claim 55, further including:
creating a video image record including the extracted image frame; and,
storing the video image record into a memory within the control server.

57. (New) The method of Claim 56, further including:
determining whether a predefined number of video image records have been stored into the memory; and,

transferring the predefined number of video image records to a image database if it is determined that the predefined number of video image records have been stored into the memory.

58. (New) The method of Claim 51, wherein the step of processing the image frame includes, processing the image frame for production and archival.